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22. (Amended) An information display comprising:
a transmissive layer;
a plurality of independently operable light emitting devices disposed to emit light through the transmissive layer, thereby being capable of displaying information to a viewer; and
a frustrator element comprising a microstructured surface to frustrate total internal reflections of light emitted by the plurality of independently operable light emitting devices, the microstructured surface comprising repeating structures, wherein the transmissive layer is disposed between the frustrator element and the plurality of independently operable light emitting devices.

23. (Amended) The information display of claim 22, wherein the repeating structures comprises a plurality of prismatic structures.

A version marked up to show changes made to the claim(s) relative to the previous version of the claim(s) is attached.

Remarks

The Amendment and Remarks are in response to the Office Action dated August 14, 2002. Claims 7, 12, 22, and 23 have been amended. Claims 4-24 are pending. The Applicants thank the Examiner for indicating that claims 8-10, 20, and 21 are allowable. Examination and reconsideration of the application as amended is requested.

§ 103 Rejections

Claims 4-7, 12-15, 17-19, and 22-24 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over WO 98/17083 to Horikx et al. (hereinafter "Horikx") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,910,706 to Stevens et al. (hereinafter "Stevens") and Japanese Patent Application Publication No. JP 11-006905 to Kawano et al. (hereinafter "Kawano"). Claim 11 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Horikx in view of Stevens. Claim 16 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Horikx in view of Stevens and Kawano and further in view of EP 0814621 to Stevens et al. (hereinafter "European application").

With respect to claims 4-6 and 13-19, independent claim 4 recites a volume diffuser with voids dispersed in a matrix material. The Office Action asserts that Kawano discloses the recited voids. The Applicants submit that Kawano teaches a light diffusing layer containing a resin binder and particulates with indentations formed into the layer using a solvent. These indentations are substantially different than the recited voids and, moreover, are not dispersed in a matrix material. The Applicants refer to a definition of “dispersion” from Hawley’s Condensed Chemical Dictionary, 12th Ed. (1993) (a copy of the page containing the definition accompanies this Amendment) which indicates that a dispersion is “[a] two-phase system, where one phase consists of finely divided particles … distributed throughout a bulk substance....” In the invention of claim 4, the “particles” of the definition correspond to voids. In other words, the voids are disposed throughout, and surrounded by, the matrix material. Kawano does not teach dispersing voids throughout the light diffusing layer (although Kawano does demonstrate dispersing particulates throughout the layer), instead Kawano teaches modifying the surface of the light diffusing layer to make it substantially more rough and rugged. None of the other cited references teach or suggest a volume diffuser with voids dispersed in a polymer matrix. Accordingly, the Applicants submit that claim 4, and claims 5, 6, and 13-19 which depend from claim 4, are patentable over the cited references. The Applicants request that the rejections of these claims be withdrawn.

With respect to claim 11, none of the cited references teach or suggest the use of a frustrator element having a surface diffuser where the frustrator element is positioned so that a transmissive layer is between the frustrator element and the light emitting devices. The Office Action indicates that Horikx teaches the use of a volume diffuser, not a surface diffuser. Stevens does not address this deficiency of Horikx. Neither of the cited references teaches or suggests the invention of claim 11. Accordingly, the Applicants submit that claim 11 is patentable over the cited references and respectfully request that this rejection be removed.

With respect to claims 7, 12, and 22-24, independent claims 12 and 22 recite a frustrator element that has a microstructured surface. Claims 12 and 22 have been amended to clarify that the microstructured surface has repeating structures, as illustrated in Figures 5A and 5B of the present application. In other words, the microstructured film is a film that has at least one surface comprising a plurality of non-random structures. The Office Action asserts that Kawano teaches a frustrator with a microstructured surface. The indentations in the surface of the light diffusing layer of Kawano are random and are not presented in repeating manner. The Applicants submit that

Kawano does not teach the recited microstructured surface as clarified by the amendment to the claims indicating that the microstructured surface comprises repeating structures.

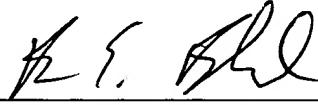
Moreover, dependent claims 7 and 23 recited that the microstructured surface comprises a plurality of prismatic structures. None of the cited references taught or suggested prismatic structures. In particular, the indentations in Kawano are not prismatic structures and would not be considered prismatic structures by those of skill in the art.

For at least these reasons, the Applicants submit that claims 7, 12, and 22-24 are patentable over the cited references. Accordingly, the Applicants request withdrawal of the rejection of these claims.

In view of the above, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the application is requested. Allowance of claims 4-24, as amended, at an early date is solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date

By: 
Bruce E. Black, Reg. No.: 41,622
Telephone No.: 651-736-3366

Office of Intellectual Property Counsel
3M Innovative Properties Company
P.O. Box 33427
St. Paul, MN 55133-3427
Facsimile No.: 651-736-3833

Version with markings to show amendments made:

7. (Amended Twice) The information display of claim 12, wherein the [microstructured surface] repeating structures comprises a plurality of prismatic structures.

12. (Amended Twice) An information display comprising:
a transmissive layer;
a plurality of independently operable light emitting devices disposed to emit light through the transmissive layer, thereby being capable of displaying information to a viewer; and
a frustrator element disposed between at least one of the light emitting devices and the transmissive layer to frustrate total internal reflections of light emitted the plurality of independently operable light emitting devices, wherein the frustrator element comprises a microstructured surface oriented toward the transmissive layer, the microstructured surface comprising a plurality of repeating structures.

22. (Amended) An information display comprising:
a transmissive layer;
a plurality of independently operable light emitting devices disposed to emit light through the transmissive layer, thereby being capable of displaying information to a viewer; and
a frustrator element comprising a microstructured surface to frustrate total internal reflections of light emitted the plurality of independently operable light emitting devices, the microstructured surface comprising a plurality of repeating structures, wherein the transmissive layer is disposed between the frustrator element and the plurality of independently operable light emitting devices.

23. (Amended) The information display of claim 22, wherein the [microstructured surface] repeating structures comprises a plurality of prismatic structures.

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